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Hybrid learning dates moved

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Public Schools Hybrid Reentry Dates communicated in late December 2020 have been revised because health data does not support increasing in-person cohorts on our original timeline. Please see below for an overview, the revised target dates, and the data review process that is used to confirm target entry dates.

JUMP, 9



Food Court currently take-out only

HOLYOKE – While tables in Café Square have been removed per Phase 3 Step 1 of the Commonwealth’s reopening plan, food court restaurants are still open for take-out. Several restaurants offer the convenience of ordering online so your meal is ready when you arrive, or offer delivery through outside services such as GrubHub. In addition, your favorite snacks like Cinnabons can be ordered in advance online or delivered right to your door. Seating is available at Holyoke Mall’s five sit-down restaurants, which are open for limited indoor dining or other service options.

FOOD, 9

Safe Neighborhood taking basketball league virtual

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Safe Neighborhood Initiative’s annual winter basketball league for young people in the Paper City is going virtual this year, thanks to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. But taking the adventure off the basketball court isn’t expected to hamper the fun or the lessons learned through the program.

VIRTUAL, 9

Coalition responds to Soldiers’ Home plan

By Shelby Macri
smacri@turley.com

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Soldiers Home has been in the spotlight this past year with the deaths of 78 veterans due to COVID-19 within the facility.

During this time, the Holyoke Soldiers Home Coalition formed, with members consisting of veterans, family of veterans, and past Soldier’s Home staff.

Including Jon Paradis, the former Deputy Superintendent of the Soldiers’ Home from 2013-15 and Paul Barabani, the Former Superintendent of the Soldiers’ Home from 2011-16. The Coalition serves as a collective voice of the community in regards to the dealings of the vets within the Soldiers Home. Both Barabani and Paradis spoke during a press conference presentation on Tuesday Jan. 26, where the coalition spoke about the plans for the new Soldier’s Home building.



The Coalition for the Holyoke Soldiers’ Home is proposing more beds for a new facility.

Submitted photo

Barabani spoke about his time working in the Soldiers’ Home, and the need to replace 270 beds in fiscal year 2013. During this time there was a plan to make 120 private

rooms, rooms that are bigger and bathrooms within; and to renovate 150 beds as semi-private rooms with two people in it. At the time there were three to four beds in one room

the veterans had to share with others. Many residents kept their wheelchairs and walkers outside of their rooms because

See SOLDIERS, page 12

Funding allocated for better air quality in schools

By Shelby Macri
smacri@turley.com

HOLYOKE – This past year has caused many changes for schools within the city and the state, in order to ensure the safety of students’ hybrid learning has come to fruition.

Due to COVID-19 many parents and family had concerns allowing their students

inside school buildings, mostly because close contact and shared air can cause infection among students. To battle the rate of infection and to ensure the safety of students the school staff has looked into devices to improve the air quality in school. The Holyoke Public School Maintenance Administrator, Whitney Anderson said that the schools

and the mayor’s office has spoken about the best route to go with improve to quality of air.

Anderson and has Spoken to the mayor’s office about the best route to take regarding the ways to improve air quality within schools. The City of Holyoke purchased high efficiency particulate air filtration units for the schools within the city, these units are porta-

ble and have been regarded as a priority in schools. Anderson said that the air quality units were regarded in three levels; those being receiving the units, assembling the units, and distributing the units.

The schools spoke to the mayor’s office about the units in the beginning of Nov. of last

See SCHOOLS, page 9

IN THE SHOP



Students at the Dean campus work on projects in the carpentry shop last week at Holyoke High School.

Submitted photo

VFW welcomes new President

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

WASHINGTON D.C. – Jan. 20 will forever be remembered by the members of the Massachusetts Veterans of Foreign Wars Honor Guard, which partook in the virtual “Parade Across America,” celebrating President Joe Biden’s inauguration.

A group of five veterans was chosen to represent the Commonwealth on a national stage last Wednesday, as the country turned a page and welcomed in the Biden Administration.

“This is the first time in the history of the inauguration parade that all 56 states and

See VFW, page 6

St. Patrick’s Road Race going virtual for 2021

HOLYOKE – If you haven’t heard by now, for the second year in a row, the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Day Road Race has been cancelled due to concerns surrounding COVID-19.

We certainly didn’t come to this decision lightly but in the interest of our participants, volunteers, and our community we have cancelled this year’s in person race. We’ve been looking forward to the race since the cancellation last year, never thinking this pandemic would last this long.

We understand that this isn’t a replacement for the real thing but running with 7,000 others right now is not possible, but we will try to make it just as fun! This March we will hold the second

Virtual Holyoke St Patrick’s Day Road Race. Create your own 10K route (or use ours!) and compete against other runners. We will provide a familiar looking t-shirt, printable custom bib number, free beer, and local giveaways.

Go to <http://racewire.com/register.php?id=11824> for all the details to register.

Lastly, thank you for your patience and support over the last year. The St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke works tirelessly year-round to make this “Homecoming Weekend” the best one of the year. We look forward to the opportunity to host you on the streets of Holyoke for the 45th running of the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Road Race in March 2022.



You can create your own course for this year’s virtual Holyoke St. Patrick’s Road Race. This is the second straight year the race has been postponed.

Submitted photo

Lisi releases finance report

HOLYOKE — Rebecca Lisi, Holyoke City Councilor at-Large and candidate for mayor, today announced the release of her 2020 year-end finance report. The report was submitted yesterday in compliance with OCPF deadlines. This is the first financial report of the 2021 Holyoke Mayoral contest.

Lisi raised \$10,458.00 in 2020, in just over three months between September and December.

“I’m humbled by the strong show support that I’ve already received from my supporters,” said Lisi. “I very much appreciate that even in these challenging times, we have received this strong financial backing so early in the race. I also need to recognize the valuable donations of time and energy, the people-power, that supporters have pledged to help with from now all the way



Rebecca Lisi

through to November.

“In each of my campaigns I’ve had to work harder and smarter than the other candidates in order to get my message out to the voters. That work is funded by the generous donations of my supporters in the community. This sort of robust financial support allows me to maintain a website and print literature and other campaign materials that help inform voters of my positions and plans for our city.”

Lisi lives in the Smith’s Ferry neighborhood of Holyoke with her husband Damian and son Lucien. She is a doctoral candidate in Political Science, ABD, at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Residents who wish to learn more about Lisi’s mayoral campaign may visit www.votelisi.com.

Holyoke Medical Center seeks blood and plasma donors

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Medical Center is actively seeking blood and convalescent plasma donors. The center’s Blood Bank depends on area residents, their friends and neighbors to help meet the transfusion needs of the local community.

“The demand for convalescent plasma is higher than the supply that has been donated throughout the region. People who have recovered from COVID-19 are encouraged to make a donation and help save the lives of up to two people in our community,” said Jon Gronbach, director of laboratory services at Holyoke Medical Center.

Convalescent plasma is a liquid component of blood from patients who have recovered from COVID-19. Patients who have recovered from the disease have antibodies to protect themselves to fight the virus. By making a blood and convalescent plasma donation, recovered

patients can help others fight COVID-19 as well.

Blood and convalescent plasma supplies continue to be low and shortages persist in all categories. Emergency supplies from the Red Cross are often limited. More than 75 percent of the blood and convalescent plasma needed by patients at the medical center comes from people living in Holyoke, Chicopee, South Hadley and the surrounding communities.

All eligible donors will receive a free recognition gift for their donation, and eligible convalescent plasma donors will receive a free COVID IgG test.

The Blood Bank, located on the first floor of Holyoke Medical Center, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Appointments are required.

For further information or to schedule an appointment, call the HMC Blood Bank at 413-534-2591.

HCC, GCC, Elms College presidents receive national recognition

HOLYOKE – The presidents of Holyoke Community College, Greenfield Community College and Elms College have been recognized for outstanding leadership in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion by the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the education technology company Cengage.

HCC president Christina Royal, GCC president Yves Salomon-Fernández, and Our Lady of the Elms president Harry E. Dumay were among 13 college presidents nationwide to receive the AAC&U-Cengage Inclusion Scholarship. The scholarship recognizes college and university presidents whose outstanding leadership to advance liberal education has resulted in reduced equity gaps, improved inclusion and belonging for minoritized students, and reformed hiring practices to promote greater diversity.

The recipients were announced Fri., Jan. 22, at the AAC&U Presidents’ Trust Symposium, part of the AAC&U Virtual Annual Meeting. The Presidents’ Trust

Symposium brings together higher education leaders from all institutional types to explore the most pressing issues facing colleges and universities and to share strategies for success.

“AAC&U is proud to recognize and support these exceptional leaders in their efforts to advance equity and quality as hallmarks of a liberal education across a diverse range of campuses and student populations,” said AAC&U president Lynn Pasquerella.

The AAC&U-Cengage Inclusion Scholarship recognizes higher education leaders who support and advance quality, equity, and student success in undergraduate education. This includes improving degree completion or transfer for students from underrepresented groups; closing equity gaps in student success; improving diversity in hiring practices and creating more equitable hiring poli-



Christina Royal

cies; and increasing the sense of belonging, well-being, and inclusion among students from historically underserved populations (e.g., racial and ethnic minorities, religious minorities, and LGBTQIA students).

“We are so excited to be able to support these amazing higher ed leaders who are making a real difference by reducing inequities and increasing access to education,” said Fernando Bleichmar, executive vice president and general manager for U.S. Higher Education at Cengage. “At Cengage, we believe learning transforms lives, and the work of these leaders is so critical in giving students the opportunity to better their lives and in creating an educated, informed, and just society.”

In recognition of their accomplishments, the AAC&U-Cengage Inclusion Scholarship recipients will each receive a one-year, complimentary AAC&U campus membership and a one-year com-

plimentary membership in the AAC&U Presidents’ Trust, a diverse network of chief executive officers who are committed to advancing the vision, values, and practices that connect liberal education with the needs of an increasingly diverse student body, a global workforce, and thriving communities. The Trust provides members with access to dedicated resources and events as well as exclusive opportunities to promote their thought leadership.

“Growing up as a first-generation, low-income, multi-racial college student, I understand some of the challenges today’s students face and the importance of having an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive,” said Royal, who is also being honored this week (Thursday, Jan. 28) as one of the 2020 Women of Impact by BusinessWest magazine. “These are very important issues to me personally and professionally, as well as to our college community, and I’m honored to receive this recognition on behalf of HCC.”

Chamber of Commerce to host annual dinner meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 2

Th annual dinner meeting of the South Hadley & Granby Chamber of Commerce will be on Tuesday, Feb. 2. The event is open to both members and non-members.

The annual dinner meeting will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021 starting at 5 p.m. This event will be a virtual Zoom meeting.

Tickets for this event are \$10 and must be pre-purchased online or invoiced so that the link can be sent. Please purchase your tickets or request an invoice by Jan. 27, 2021.

For the first time ever, this event will feature a comedy improv show provided by Happier Valley Comedy.

For your convenience, you can pur-

chase tickets online for the event online! You may purchase tickets online at <https://www.shgchamber.com/events/annualdinnermeetin>.

Enjoy the show from the comfort of your home or office! To be in spirit of this event on Groundhog’s Day, please join in the Punxsutawney Punch, recipe below or your favorite beverage as the chamber

toasts in the New Year!

If your business requires an invoice, please contact melissa@shgchamber.com.

The chamber is also looking for sponsors for the event. If you’re interested in sponsoring this Event, please contact Steven Laplante at steven.laplante@era.com or Melissa Whitelock at melissa@shgchamber.com.

COLLEGE NOTE

Springfield College recognizes 2020 Dean’s List

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield College Recognizes Dean’s List Students for the 2020 Fall Semester.

Aiden Consedine for academic excellence for the 2020 fall semester. Consedine has a primary major of Business Management.

Michael Lukasiewicz for academic excellence for the 2020 fall semester. Lukasiewicz has a primary major of Education.

Jeannie Sosa for academic excellence for the 2020 fall semester. Sosa has a primary major of Human Services.

The criteria for selection to the Dean’s List are as follows: The student must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded coursework for the term, exclusive of “P” grades. The student must not have any incompletes or missing grades in the designated term. The student must have a minimum semester grade average of 3.500 for the term.

Roger Williams Univ. announces Dean’s List

BRISTOL, RI – Select students have been named to the Fall 2020 Dean’s List at Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I. Full-time students who complete 12 or more credits per semester and earn a GPA of 3.4 or higher are placed on the Dean’s List that semester. The following students have earned this achievement: Madelyn Duggan and Lauren Ryan, both of Holyoke, MA.

AIC announces fall 2020 Dean’s List

SPRINGFIELD – American International College (AIC) in Springfield, Massachusetts, has named 640 students to the Dean’s List for the fall 2020 semester. Dean’s List students are full time students who have achieved a 3.3 to 4.0 GPA. AIC commends the efforts and accomplishments of these scholars during this unprecedented time. Holyoke residents making Dean’s List are: Ruth Arzuaga Rodriguez, Jacoby Authier, Altavise Chinn, Darius Diaz, Destiny Feliciano, Alicia Gonzalez, Isabelle Larochelle, Calisha Lopez, John Neves, Naisha Ortiz, Emma Otero, Anelys Perez Rivera, Mariana Raphael, Nathan Rivas, Musashi Tajima, Adamaris Torres, Kendrick Torres, Iris Villodas.



Submissions are always welcome

Send us your engagement, wedding, baby, anniversary and graduation news and photos.

thesun@turley.com

STCC investment with charging stations for electric vehicles

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College has installed two electric vehicle (EV) charging ports in one of the campus’ parking lots as part of an effort to reduce fossil fuel emissions and encourage green energy.

The charging stations are in operation and available for use by the public as well as students, faculty and staff at STCC. Each charging station can accommodate two vehicles.

“STCC is installing them now because we were lucky enough to participate in an Eversource Energy incentive opportunity which made them feasible,” said Thomas Therrien, director of operations for the Facilities Department at STCC. “We’re thrilled to have these charging stations on campus. It’s part of STCC’s commitment to protecting the climate and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.”



STCC has added charging stations for electric vehicles. Submitted photo

Eversource paid for the infrastructure installation through its EV Make Ready program, and since STCC is in an environmental justice community, Eversource also covered the cost of the EV chargers. STCC will pay an annual service fee.

“Environmental justice community” is a term to describe situations where multiple factors, including both environmental and socioeconomic stressors, may affect health and the environment.

“We are proud to help Springfield Technical Community College offer EV charging to its students, faculty and staff,” said James Cater of Eversource. “As a catalyst for clean energy, we welcome the opportunity to help our customers make progress toward their sustainability goals by installing EV

charging stations.”

The charging stations feature a full motion color LCD display that instructs drivers how to use them. Stations are located in Lot A in front of Garvey Hall, which is accessible from Federal Street.

STCC is participating in Eversource’s EV Make Ready Program, which has been approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities to encourage development of an electric vehicle marketplace and to facilitate deployment and use of electric vehicles throughout Massachusetts.

STCC’s actions drew praise from Tanisha Arena, executive director at Arise for Social Justice, a Springfield-based organization that advocates for

low-income people. Part of its mission is to push for environmental justice.

“I think it is an important step for the organization because it’s about ease of access, for one,” Arena said. “If folks with electric vehicles know they can charge their cars on campus, it brings them to the area and perhaps they will spend more time in the city patronizing small businesses.”

Arena added, “Springfield is designated as an environmental justice community and has a failing air quality grade from the American Lung Association. More than half of our residents have asthma or other respiratory issues. A reduction in emissions is good for all of us.”

Curbside corned beef dinner planned

HOLYOKE – The Ancient Order of Hibernians-James A. Curran Division One and The Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Division Two of Hampden/Hampshire Counties are sponsoring a “2021 Irish Night in Holyoke-A Go Go”, a curbside pickup of a Traditional Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner and Ribs prepared by the Log Cabin of Holyoke. The event is Saturday, March 6, 2021 at the Log Cabin 500 Easthampton Rd. in Holyoke-pickup is from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on that date. The cultural event will benefit the Maurice

A. Donahue Memorial Scholarship and is in memory of Daniel P. Curran.

The Log Cabin will prepare and feature a traditional corned beef and cabbage dinner and ribs, hash, carrots, potatoes, brown bread, and dessert. The cost is \$25.00 per person and includes the meal and one entry into our 50/50 raffle.

For reservations contact Joe O’Connor at 413-627-7148 or Fran Hennessey at 413-785-5687 by Feb. 27 or online at Eventbrite.com. The Hibernian website is aoh-holyoke.com.

Saimeri featured at drive-thru supper

AGAWAM – Local outstanding vocalist Joe Saimeri will be the featured outdoor vocalist at the drive-thru supper on Friday, Feb. 12 from 4:30 to 5:00 p.m. in the Agawam Congregational Church parking lot drive thru.

“It will be exciting to sing in whatever the weather will be on the 12th,” said Mr. Saimeri. If there is a snowstorm, the event will be moved to the 13th at the same time.

Songs of love like “Love Me With All Your Heart,” “It’s Not Unusual, Lady,” and more, will be heard by those waiting in their cars to drive thru to pick up their suppers catered by Partners Restaurant.

Saimeri has sung for a Bright Nights Opening, at the Log Cabin, MGM, Aqua Turf, and more.

Hailing from West Springfield, Saimeri will be performing some of his favorite American Songbook love songs in honor of the Valentine’s weekend.

For more information, contact the church at 413-786-7111 or 413-530-8000.



Joe Saimeri will perform at the Agawam Congregational Church drive-thru supper on Feb. 12. Submitted photo

Run a half-marathon, help local veterans

WARE — Here’s a great way to fulfill your New Year’s resolutions while helping local veterans and military families.

The Brookfield Institute’s Virtual HomeFront Strong Holiday Half-Marathon kicked off on Christmas Day. Runners and walkers can sign up now, then start training — and building resilience. Once the 13.1 miles have been completed in one fell swoop, the mileage from a tracking app can be sent to the organizers. Runners and walkers will receive a T-shirt. The fastest finishers will be recognized on the Brookfield Institute website and on social media. The virtual half-marathon runs until Valentine’s Day.

The event is a fundraiser for the Brookfield Institute’s HomeFront Strong program, which connects trained volunteers with veterans and military families. The entry fee for the Half-Marathon is \$30. Runners and walkers of any age and ability are invited to participate.

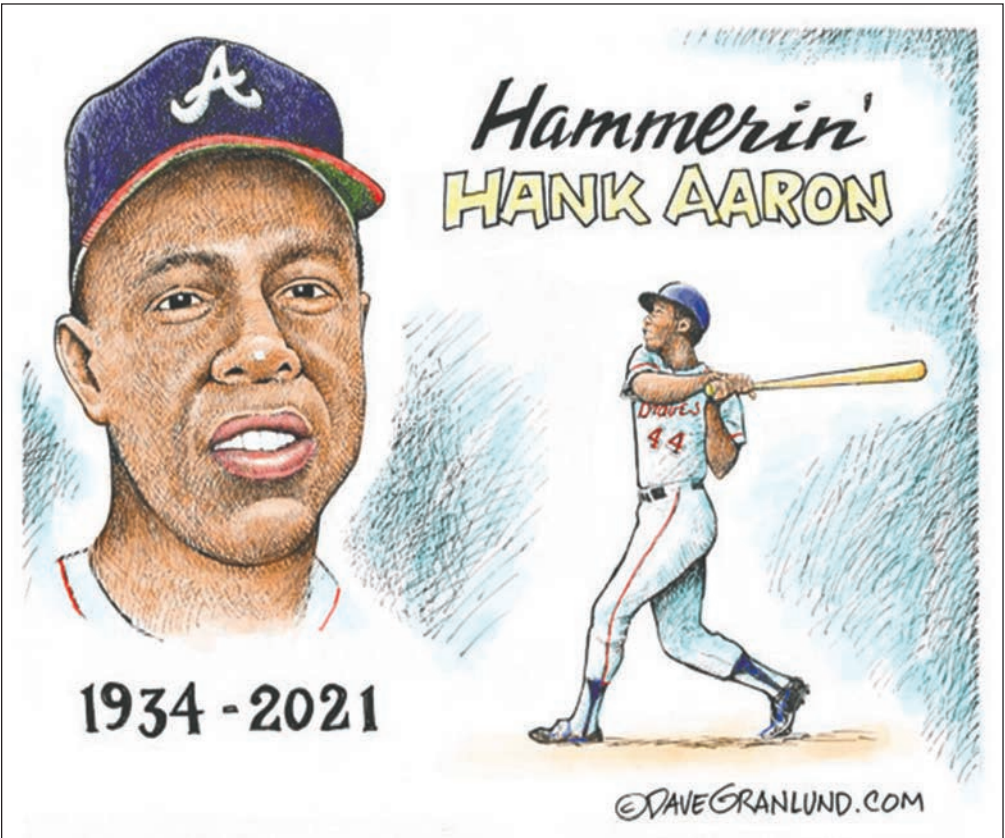
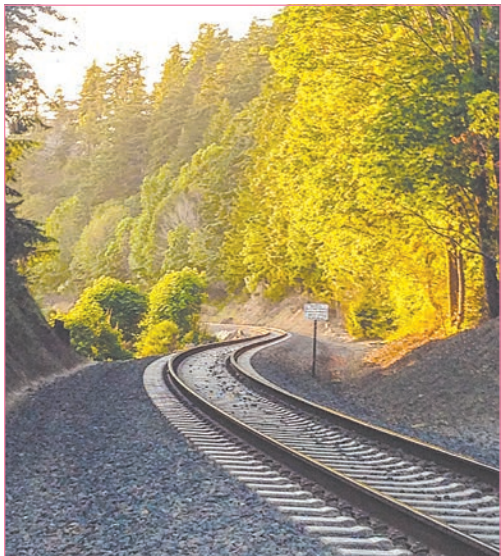
To register, go to the Brookfield Institute website, www.brookfieldinstitute.org.

Poetry Corner

Railroad Reunion

By Thomas P. Kennedy

A silver ribbon winding like
A snake across America's past.
Punched promontory spikes
Cultured in speckled steel-like,
Bundling bulls trampling
On the sacred ground.
Railroads gone,
Forgotten for a time.
But the promise of beauty
And strength will never leave;
The silver ribbon winding
Like a snake across America's past.



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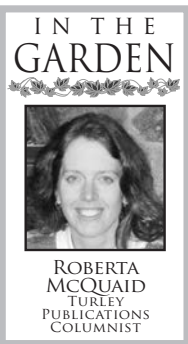
Guest Column

Indoor seed sowing just like the pros do

My first experience with seed sowing involved an egg carton, some potting soil and a few marigold seeds. I must have been about 10 years old. I can still recall how amazed I was that a live plant could grow from what appeared to be a dried up sliver of straw. I can even conjure up the smell of the moistened egg cartons if I think about it hard enough! Even more enthralling of a memory is the first harvest of flowers a couple of months after my offspring made its way out to the garden.

While it is still too early to start marigolds or even tomatoes indoors, it is the perfect time study up on the process so that you can be successful. Sure, it involves a bit more than an egg carton and a window sill, but out of it all you'll be rewarded for your hard work with a bounty of blooms or a basket of vegetables or both. Here are a few pointers that I have gleaned from many seasons of starting seeds indoors.

The general idea is to provide a moist, warm environment for the seed to germinate and then a semi-warm, well-lit environment for the plant to grow on. Therefore, props are necessary components if you want to be successful. Previous articles have covered this part of seed-starting in depth, but I'll re-cap the highlights. Invest in some heat mats and set them at 70 degrees to provide bottom-heat. As far as light goes, the window sill won't cut it unless you are extremely diligent about turning the plants many times over the course of the day, and even then, "stretch" is likely to occur. Instead, adjust a "shop light" so



that it can be raised and lowered easily. One cool fluorescent bulb and one warm are recommended but two cool work just fine in my experience. Forgo garden soil or even regular potting soil in place of a finely milled seed-starting mix. Sterilize shallow containers of choice in a 10% bleach solution before using them.

Sow teenie seeds on the surface of moist starting mix; small seed can be sown in shallow fur-

rows. Space as best you can by folding an index card, placing the seed in the fold and tapping the card with your finger. Larger seeds can be buried a quarter of an inch apart. Cover with a humidity dome or a clear plastic bag propped up like a tent and place on bottom heat. Mist the soil of surface-sown seeds occasionally. When thoroughly dry, soak the container in a few inches of water; it will absorb moisture like a sponge. Once germination occurs, remove the dome or bag and place the seedlings within a couple of inches of the shop light off of the heat mats. Adjust lights accordingly as growth occurs. Use liquid fertilizer at one-quarter to half-strength after a couple weeks and transplant into small, individual containers or cells after true leaves form.

Transplanted seedlings can happily grow under the lights until it approaches the time to plant them outdoors. About a week before Memorial Day, harden off heat lovers such as tomatoes, peppers, basil or marigolds. Place in a sheltered spot and gradually work up to more exposure until finally they are outdoors all day and all night. All of this work



may seem like a lot, but the benefits to starting your own seedlings are many, the first of which is the endless number of varieties for sale as seeds versus those available as plants at your local nursery.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

A Quote

OF NOTE

"Talent
sets
the floor,
character
sets
the ceiling."

Bill Belichick

Letters to the Editor Policy

Letters to the Editor have a maximum of 350 words. We require writers to include their name, address and phone number in order for our office to authenticate authorship prior to publication. Addresses and phone numbers are not published.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions. Libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks or defamation of character are not allowed.

Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

Please email (preferred) letters to thesun@turley.com. Mailed letters can be sent to The Sun, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

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Simply log on to our web site, choose the paper you want the announcement to appear in, then use our SUBMISSION link to email your information.



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Spring courses set to begin next month

HOLYOKE — The spring 2021 semester officially began at Holyoke Community College on Monday, Jan. 25, but prospective students still have two more opportunities to start classes in February and March.

Spring session II classes at HCC begin Tues., Feb. 16. Spring start III classes begin Mon., March 29.

“HCC introduced two “Flexible Fall” start dates last semester to accommodate students as they adjusted to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and they were very popular,” said Mark Hudgik, HCC’s direc-

tor of Admissions. “We decided to continue this spring with two flexible start dates for students who may not have been ready on Jan. 25.”

Feb. 16-start classes run for 12 weeks. March 29-start classes run for seven. All spring semester courses conclude by Wed., May 12, 2021.

Students who enroll for spring session II or III have the opportunity to take a variety of different classes in a wide array of academic areas and can earn as many as four credits per course for a lab science, such as biology or forensic science.

These accelerated spring courses are being offered in anatomy and physiology, anthropology, biology, communication, culinary arts, Earth science, education, engineering, English, English as a Second Language, forensic science, history, human services, marketing, math, medical assisting, nutrition, philosophy, political science, psychology, social science, and sociology.

With the exception of culinary arts and medical assisting classes, which include in-person, on-campus components, all spring session II and III classes

are either fully online or “blended remote,” which means they include both asynchronous lessons and real-time virtual instruction.

A full list of classes for spring session II and III can be viewed at hcc.edu/spring.

A number of the courses for the 2020-2021 school year have been remote since the pandemic. The school has also had to modify a lot of its courses in order to accommodate health and safety protocols set by the state. The college has been able to offer a lot of unique and useful courses since the onset of the pandemic.

Free tax assistance offered

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Partner for Community Action is gearing up for the annual free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA). Income eligible taxpayers earning less than \$57,000 annually qualify and should call 413- 263-6500 to schedule an appointment.

VITA volunteers assist low wage earners complete their 2020 federal and state income tax returns in addition to the earned income tax credits, child tax credit and education credits. Further making sure taxpayer claim and receive all state and federal tax benefits, including the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). EITC is a federal income tax benefit designed to assist working families. It has been called the most significant federal program of lifting Americans out of poverty.

Paul F. Bailey, executive director, said, “although we are closed to the public, the agency continues to assist participants. “This year due to COVID-19 we are implementing a new system using a drop box method. Drop box will

allow participants to safely drop-off all required tax documents in advance. Volunteer tax preparers will complete and follow up. Completed taxes will be mailed or we can arrange for pickups”.

Springfield Partners also offer the Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) designed to assist taxpayers having issues before the IRS and/or the State Department of Revenue. If you’ve received a notice from either state or federal tax authority or if you need to file prior year taxes you should call Mary Ellen at 413-263-6500 ext. 6565 or Marty O’Connor at 413-263-6500 ext. 6566.

Springfield Partners is the official anti-poverty agency serving greater Springfield and parts of Western MA. We offer several programs and services including Eviction Clinic, Housing Counseling, Credit Counseling, Financial Literacy, Weatherization, Veterans Services, Emergency Fuel, New Beginnings Early Education & Care, COVID-19 Emergency Response, Scholarships and Telephone Reassurance.

Trading Post Consignment Shop holding Saturday hours

AGAWAM – Starting Saturday, Feb. 6, the Trading Post Consignment Shop located at the First Baptist Church of Agawam, 760 Main Street, Agawam will be extending its hours to include the first Saturday of each month. While our Wednesday hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., our Saturday hours will be 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Please come on by and check out our shop. We carry a variety of items including clothing, shoes, handbags, jewelry, toys, household and gift items.

Due to Covid -19 restrictions and workplace safety standards, we ask that patrons please adhere to our face coverings and sales space occupan-

cy requirements. Capacity limitation signs are posted outside each sales room indicating the number of people allowed. To best maintain safe social distancing, a traffic flow pattern has been added and separate doors to enter and exit our facility are marked.

For future news and information, especially on our popular \$5 bag sale taking place in late February/early March, please visit our Facebook business page known as The Trading Post Consignment Shop or follow us on Instagram @fbctradingpost.

We thank our customers for their continued support, patience, understanding and compliance during this difficult and unprecedented times.

Free COVID-19 testing at HCC

HOLYOKE — Free “Stop the Spread” COVID-19 testing at Holyoke Community College has been extended until March 31, 2021, according to the Holyoke Board of Health.

Drive-through testing at HCC is conducted six days a week in parking lot H near the western entrance to the Donahue Building on the college’s main campus, 303 Homestead Ave.

HCC has been serving as a “Stop the Spread” drive-through testing site since Aug. 26 to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Drivers are asked to enter the campus from Homestead Avenue, turn left onto the Campus Road and proceed to parking lot H. There will be signs and parking attendants on site to manage the flow of traffic.

The HCC testing site is open Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.; and Tuesday and Thursday from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Testing is free to all Massachusetts residents, and conducted on a first come, first serve basis. There are no appointments and no referral is necessary. Turnaround time for results is typically four days or fewer.

More information on all of the Stop the Spread test sites across the state can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/stop-the-spread>

Please Note: Testing may sometimes be cancelled due to inclement weather. Be sure to visit the Holyoke Board of Health website for up-to-date information on cancellations: <https://www.holyoke.org/departments/board-of-health>

Homework house offers free virtual after school tutoring services

HOLYOKE – Homework House is offering free virtual after school tutoring services to elementary school children in need of extra academic support. Students in Holyoke as well as surrounding communities can take advantage of this individualized support at no cost. This service will be provided for students in first to sixth grade. All tutoring is provided in a safe virtual environment with qualified tutors.

Homework House has been offering quality after school tutoring for over thirteen years. During the pandemic, tutoring has been provided online and has included support in reading, math, and other areas where students need additional help. This service can lessen

the burden of academic support on parents and caretakers during the pandemic. It can also help to lift student achievement and combat learning loss at this time.

Tutors are retired teachers, education students from many local colleges, and community volunteers all who undergo a strict vetting process and are supervised by Homework House staff.

After school tutoring is offered Monday through Friday during the school year. To make an appointment for tutoring, or for more information about program, please contact Angel Coriano, Director of Programs at 413-887-2012 or email him at acoriano@homeworkhouseholyokey.org.

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CLUES ACROSS	sound	5. Wedding accessory	modern human in Europe: __-magnon
1. Gather a harvest	47. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea	6. Deep, narrow gorges	37. Adult female bird
5. Federal Republic of Germany	49. You might put it in a fire	7. Dry cereal	39. Do away with
8. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!	50. Partner to “oohed”	8. Competitions that require speed	40. Lens
11. “The Little Mermaid”	55. Actor Idris	9. Cain and __	41. Flattened appendage
13. The common gibbon	56. Slippery	10. Snake sound	42. Post or pillar in Greek temple
14. Volcanic island in Fiji	57. Plant of the bean family	12. Type of amino acid (abbr.)	44. A medieval citizen of Hungary
15. Mother of Perseus	59. One point north of northeast	14. Pattern of notes in Indian music	45. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
16. Egg cells	60. Patti Hearst’s captors	19. Satisfy	46. Abba __, Israeli politician
17. Teams’ best pitchers	61. Places to hang clothes	23. Misfire	47. Sew
18. Credit associations	62. Midwife	24. Nearsightedness	48. Evergreen trees and shrubs having oily one-seeded fruits
20. Advance	63. Of she	25. Indicates before	51. Swiss river
21. Hair styling products	64. S. Korean statesman	26. Increase motor speed	52. Grayish-white
22. Benign tumors		27. When you hope to get there	53. A way to illustrate
25. Arriving early		28. Indicates position	54. College basketball superpower
30. Called it a career		29. Where rockers perform	58. Midway between south and southeast
31. __ Paulo, city		34. Substitute	
32. Avoid with trickery		35. __ juris: of one’s own right	
33. Easter egg	CLUES DOWN	36. Earliest form of	
38. Veterans battleground	1. Cool!		
41. Lack of success	2. Amounts of time		
43. Thing that causes disgust	3. Aboriginal people of Japan		
45. Deep, continuing	4. Popular veggies		

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 11

In The News

VFW, from page 1

territories were featured. We've done a number of high-profile parades in the past, but this is the highest honor that we've been involved in. We knew were up to the task and put as much energy into this as possible," said Brian Willette, a U.S. Army veteran from South Hadley, who carried a rifle during the procession.

Willette partook in the venture alongside his daughter Christine Lupacchino, a U.S. Air Force and Chicopee resident, who serves as Commander of the Honor Guard.

Eric Segundo, a U.S. Army veteran from Springfield, Rene Fuertes, a U.S. Navy veteran from Randolph and Keith Buckhout, a U.S. Marine and Air Force veteran from Easthampton rounded out the five-person unit.

On Jan. 20, the Honor Guard paid tribute to "The Greatest Generation," veterans who served in WWII, and "The Newest Greatest Generation," members of today's all-volunteer U.S. Armed Forces.

During its presentation, members of the Honor Guard wore WWII Airborne uniforms, revealing the distinctive shoulder insignia of the 82nd Airborne Division, the country's first division comprised entirely of all-volunteer Paratroopers.

While the Honor Guard filmed and submitted its routine more than a month ago, it did not receive word of its selection until two days prior to the inauguration. Fortunately, the group had mentally prepared itself for the spotlight.

The Honor Guard was featured on national television twice last Wednesday, once during the virtual parade and again in the evening on "Celebrating America," a special inauguration program that was

hosted by actor Tom Hanks.

Willette, Commander of the MA Military Order of the Purple Heart, noted that, "This event really encapsulated everything that we stand for."

The national stage was not too big for the five-person squad of combat veterans, who hone their skills at a wide range of events each year.

"Whether it's posting the colors at a little league championship game here in western Mass or at a Red Sox game, the same professionalism and dedication goes into each Honor Guard presentation," said Willette.

Willette was especially proud of his daughter, Lupacchino, who offered a congratulatory message to President Biden. Participating in the Honor Guard is a family tradition that dates back many decades.

"My dad and her grandfather was a member of the old United States Honor Guard in Washington D.C. in the 1950s," said Willette. "I often think it skipped me and went to her; the expertise. She really knows her stuff as our Commander. I couldn't be prouder."

For Willette, the recent attack on the U.S. Capital brought added significance to an honor that he already considered to be special in its own right. He explained how the events that unfolded in Washington D.C. several weeks ago impacted his approach.

"The events of Jan. 6 added special weight to this day. The attack on the Capital, I feel, was a direct attack on our Constitution," said Willette. "It increased the magnitude and gave us that extra pride. Being all veterans, we've sworn to uphold the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic, and I feel that we played a role in upholding that Constitution on Jan. 20, participating in the inauguration."



Members of the Massachusetts Veterans of Foreign Wars Honor Guard pose together at Szo Park in Chicopee. Submitted photos



U.S. Army veteran Brian Willette of the MA VFW Foreign Wars Honor Guard partook in the virtual "Parade Across America" on Jan. 20 alongside his daughter, Honor Guard Commander Christine Lupacchino, a U.S. Air Force and Chicopee resident, Eric Segundo, a U.S. Army veteran from Springfield, Rene Fuertes, a U.S. Navy veteran from Randolph and Keith Buckhout, a U.S. Marine and Air Force veteran from Easthampton.

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Winter sports begin

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – Winter sports, however abbreviated, have begun for several schools in Western and Central Massachusetts.

While Quabbin got off to a start a bit earlier, several Western Mass. teams caught up with game action beginning last Thursday evening.

Ludlow, Amherst, Agawam, Ware, and Hampden Charter School of Science were all in action with girls and boys basketball.

Hockey also got in on the action over the weekend, though not all of the hockey teams were involved with some schools opting not to participate in the sport.

Chicopee, Chicopee Comprehensive, and Minnechaug, along with Pathfinder and Palmer, were scheduled to get involved on the action earlier this week, with the game action starting to pick up and teams attempting to play 10 to 12 games during the next five or six weeks, which is what is left of the winter season.

Agawam is scheduled to be in a bubble west of the Connecticut River, including Westfield and West Springfield.

Amherst will matchup with Ludlow, among other teams,



Amherst took the ice to start the regular season last week against Ludlow. The team's season was reinstated by the school committee this week.

Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

and Ware and Hampden Charter mixed up last week, and Ware is set to take on Palmer and Pathfinder in the coming weeks.

Minnechaug and Chicopee Comprehensive are set to match up next week as well. East

Longmeadow will also join the mix in that bubble.

In hockey action, Ludlow and Amherst had their first games of the regular season. Ludlow, Agawam, Minnechaug, and other Berry Division teams



There is limited action in the region with some schools opting out of the winter season.

will be part of a league in the coming season. Most of the teams in that league play their home games at Olympia Ice Center in West Springfield.

Action at Olympia Ice Center last Saturday included Ludlow and Amherst as well as East Longmeadow and Agawam. All players were observing changes in pro-



Hampden Charter is one of the schools playing this winter.

ocol by changing into uniforms and gear in parking lots. Temperatures were cold with an even colder wind chill on Saturday. Players were only allowed to put skates on once inside the arena. The small number of fans allowed to attend games were not allowed to mill around in the lobby, and

See WINTER, page 8

Entry forms available for Thompson

WATERBURY, Conn. — The American-Canadian Tour (ACT) and Pro All Stars Series (PASS) have released the official entry form for the Thompson 300 at Connecticut's Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park on Oct. 9 and 10. More than \$100,000 in projected awards are posted for the return of the historic event as part of the 59th World Series of Speedway Racing.

As previously announced, the 300-lap event will pay the winner a guaranteed minimum of \$20,000. Second place receives \$7,500 with \$5,000 for third. Everyone who takes the green flag will bring home at least \$1,200. Thirty-six starting

positions have been posted with a total of \$85,475 in base purse money.

Lap money is also up for grabs. Every lap sold will award \$50 to the driver who leads that lap. This means up to \$15,000 in lap money and the Thompson 300 winner could pocket up to \$35,000 total.

A Last Chance "B" Feature has been posted as well. This final round qualifier will pay \$1,000 to win and \$250 to start for teams that do not transfer into the Thompson 300.

"The Thompson 300 is one of the most famous events in Modified racing," ACT managing partner Cris Michaud said. "When Tom Mayberry

and I reached out agreement to promote events at Thompson Speedway, Tom's first idea was to bring back the Thompson 300. Together, we've put a lot of work into figuring out how to make it happen. We're already excited even with the date still nearly nine months away. It's going to be a must-see event this year and hopefully for years to come."

The entry form has been posted at www.acttour.com/outlaw-open-modifieds and www.proallstarseries.com. Teams that register by Thursday, April 15 receive an early-entry discount. The first 26 teams that register will also receive a garage stall for World Series weekend.

Qualifying for the Thompson 300 is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 9 with the 300-lap main event on Sunday, Oct. 10. An optional practice session is planned for Friday, Oct. 8. More information will be announced over the coming months. All schedules are subject to change.



The Thompson 300 will take place in October at Thompson Speedway.

Submitted photo

See ENTRY, page 8



Members of the South Hadley High School hockey team protest outside Plains Elementary School. The team is seeking to have its season reinstated by the school committee.

Submitted photo

Hockey team protests season cancellation

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

SOUTH HADLEY – The South Hadley School Committee has changed course, voting Monday to allow ice hockey to be played.

The committee had initially denied the proposal for hockey brought forward at

a previous meeting, but outcry from the hockey players and their families brought the subject forward again at Monday's four-hour long meeting.

The issue was brought up immediately, and then the decision was reversed by a 3-1 vote of the committee

See PROTEST, page 8

New 2020 umpires needed

REGION – The Western Massachusetts Baseball Umpire Association is looking for individuals who are interested in umpiring baseball at the high school and youth level. The WMBUA services high school baseball and various other leagues in the Greater Springfield area/ Hampden County. The WMBUA’s first year members class will be held for roughly five to six weeks, beginning in February. The class dates right now are fluid as the organization monitors what happens with the

COVID-19 pandemic. Class is usually one or two nights per week from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The class takes place in the First Baptist Church of East Longmeadow’s classrooms at 50 Parker Street. Classes may also be virtual if COVID-19 does not allow for in-person meetings. If you are interested in taking the classes, contact Chris Meffen, the WMBUA Secretary, via email at cmeffen8017@gmail.com or visit the WMBUA website at <http://wmbua.org>.

Follow Turley Sports on Instagram

Turley Publications sports department has recently joined Instagram. You can find our account by searching “turleysports.” We will regularly feature samples of photos that you will see in our publications on a weekly basis. Please follow and share with

your friends and loved ones. We will be featuring photos from all 11 of our sports sections in the coming weeks, but as always, you can see all the photos that appear by subscribing to your local paper or picking up a copy in your community.

ENTRY, from page 7

This year’s Thompson 300 is the first time the event has been held since 2005. Previous winners include Northeast racing legends Richie Evans, Geoffrey Bodine, Ron Bouchard, Jimmy Spencer, Mike Stefanik, Steve Park, Mike McLaughlin, and Ted Christopher. The return of the Thompson 300 is the finale in the six-race Thompson Outlaw Open Modified Series. The opener of the series is the \$10,000-to-win Icebreaker 125 on April 10 and 11. Some of the top names in Tour-Type Modified racing have already entered the Icebreaker event, including Keith Rocco, Doug Coby, Bobby Santos III, Ron Silk, Mike Christopher Jr., and Jon McKennedy. The series also includes \$5,000-to-win events on June 16, July 7, Aug. 11, and Sept. 15. Teams that attempt to qualify for all six Outlaw Open Modified Series events will be eligible for provisional starting spots in the Thompson 300. The number of available provisionals is to

be determined. The rules for the Outlaw Open Modified Series have been posted at www.acttour.com/outlaw-open-modifieds. Contact Greg Felton at (413) 695-2272 or gt.felton@gmail.com with any Modified tech questions. For more information about the American-Canadian Tour, contact the ACT offices at (802) 244-6963, media@acttour.com, or visit www.act-tour.com. You can also get updates on Facebook and Twitter at @ACTTour. For technical information concerning all PASS divisions, and for media or marketing questions, please contact passracing@roadrunner.com or visit www.proallstarseries.com. Don’t forget to “Like” the Pro All Stars Series on Facebook or follow on Twitter @PASSSLM14 to keep up with breaking news as it happens. For general Thompson Speedway inquiries, call (860) 923-2280, email oval@thompsons Speedway.com, or visit www.thompsons Speedway.com. You can follow Thompson Speedway on Facebook and Instagram at @ThompsonSpeedway or on Twitter at @ThompsonSpdwy.

How to contact the Sports Editor

Have the scoop on a local sports story? Want to submit a team photo, pass along a potential story idea, or just find out how to get a copy of that great photo of your young athlete? Please send all sports-related press releases and information to Sports Editor Greg Scibelli at: sports@turley.com or call, 1-413-283-8393.

Relics sign-ups now available

UDLOW – The Western Mass Relics has opened registration for the 2021 Senior Softball Season. The Silver Division (age 50 to 64) has filled 36 of the 112 spots and the Gold Division (65-and-up) has filled 32 of the 96 spots.

The registrations are accepted on a first come first serve basis. All our games are played at the Fish & Game in Ludlow. For further information or to register go to <http://www.westernmass-relics.org>.

Pioneers to host Pelham clinic

UDLOW – Western United Pioneers FC is excited to offer a soccer clinic in Pelham, MA for players in the Massachusetts North Region. The clinic provides off-season training and skill development by WUP FC coaches. The second sessions available. This program is offered to boys and girls born in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. The four-week program includes one practice per week for a total of \$65 per session. Sessions

will consist of a max of 15 players per field (COVID regulation for the players’ safety). SESSION 2: MONDAYS 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, and 3/15 • Boys and Girls Born 2013 and 2014: Session is at 5 p.m. • Boys and Girls Born 2010, 2011, and 2012: Session is at 6 p.m. The sessions will be held at Pelham Elementary School at 45 Amherst Road, Pelham, MA 01002.

WINTER from page 7

the extension of benches was completed as well as a fenced-in extension. At Olympia, if more than one player on a team was sent to the penalty box, they were sent to their team’s bench to

serve out the penalty in order to have one player in the box at a time. The winter season will continue until late February and then Fall 2 is scheduled to begin with some basketball action, indoor track, girls volleyball, and football taking center stage into the first month of the spring.

PROTEST, from page 7

with one member absent from the meeting. School committee member Allison Schlachter brought the conversation back forward. “The decision just was not sitting well with me,” she said. She reached out to the South Hadley athletic department. She said the social isolation has been tough for students. More questions were answered and Schlachter proposed allowing the hockey team to be played. Charles Miles cast the lone dissenting vote. Players initially did not take the decision of not being able to play lightly. Following the South Hadley School Committee’s decision to deny the Tigers an opportunity to play, a protest was held last Saturday morning at Plain Elementary School. Members of the team assembled at the school to let the school district know how they felt about the decision to cancel their season. South Hadley ice hockey, which co-ops with neighbor Granby, was prepared to begin its season during the past week before the school committee opted not to allow the sport to play. Basketball is also not being played at South Hadley. South Hadley ice hockey has been a perennial playoff contender during the past decade. The Tigers have also

co-oped with Holyoke in the past, though that partnership recently ended. There has been no movement to renew the partnership. Athletic Director Eric Castonguay said he gave a presentation to the school committee at the Jan. 4 meeting. The vote was then delayed until later in the month. “I demonstrated to the committee how we could run a season safely,” said Castonguay. “I showed them what I needed for support to ensure safe protocols were being enforced, and an emphasis for now spectators to limit the amount of exposure.” South Hadley participated in the fall season. The school successful played boys soccer, girls soccer, cross country, and field hockey. Girls volleyball was deferred to the Fall 2 season. Football for all schools was deferred to the fall season. There were some minor hiccups with a few isolated COVID-19 cases in the fall, but nothing that resulted in any major shutdowns or delays in the fall season, which was also abbreviated and included between 10 and 12 contests. A limited number of fans were allowed at games during the fall due to the contests being held outdoors, though Castonguay recommended having no fans during the winter sports to ensure the ability for games to be played. Town surrounding South Hadley are not playing any winter sports, including Granby, Belchertown, and Holyoke.

How to prevent busy kids from overextending themselves

Today’s teenagers are busy. According to the American Time Use Survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average high school student spends just under an hour and a half each weekday participating in extracurricular activities that include playing sports, working/volunteering and religious activities. With so much do and lots of encouragement to participate in their communities, teens can easily find themselves overextended. Extracurricular activities are important, and some have even been linked to improved academic performance. But it’s equally important that high school students avoid burnout, which can adversely affect their academic performance and how much they enjoy school and other activities.

Parents can employ various strategies to help busy teenagers avoid overextending themselves. • **Learn the signs of burnout and look for them.** Even the most overextended teenager probably enjoys many of the activities he or she engages in. So it’s unlikely that kids will self-report burnout to their parents, teachers, coaches, or other authority figures. Parents can learn to spot the signs of burnout to identify if their child is overextended. According to Understood.org, a website sponsored by 15 nonprofit organizations devoted to helping parents of kids between the ages of three and 20, procrastination, negative attitudes, testiness, difficulty concentrating, and a disinterest in things kids once liked are some potential indicators of burnout. Parents who notices any of these

signs in their children might want to look at their kids’ schedules to see if their children are simply taking on more than they can chew. • **Teach kids time management skills.** Time management skills can help kids make effective and efficient use of their time. Encourage kids who are struggling with their schedules to use a calendar to plan their weeks. Knowing what’s expected of them each day can help kids develop a plan to get everything done. In addition, when kids make a list of their daily activities, parents can go over that list with them to see if they’re taking on too much. Discuss the calendar with kids, and if kids express feelings of exhaustion or burnout, go through the calendar to see where they can free up some time, even if it means cutting some activities out of

their schedules entirely. • **Teach kids the art of prioritizing.** Parents know that some tasks are more important than others. But kids may not be so savvy. Teach kids how to prioritize, emphasizing that academics always come first. Give kids some credit if they’re initially resistant to dropping some activities, as that can indicate an admirable willingness to commit. But emphasize that school comes first, and that activities that are low priority might need to be sacrificed during the school year. In addition, point out that certain activities that are not school-related can be revisited in the summer, when kids typically have less hectic schedules. Burnout can be harmful to high school students. Parents can work with their children to ensure they aren’t overextending themselves.

HYBRID, from page 1

Overview:

- PK through Grade 5: This new proposal prioritizes slowly staggering the entry of students in grades PK through Grade 5 and starts with our youngest learners first.
- Grades 6-8: will run Campus Learning Centers (CLC) as their hybrid model. Campus Learning Centers offer full-day, in-person support from HPS staff, where students can join their remotely-taught classes with consistent wi-fi and in-person support. Teachers will continue to teach their remote schedule while the students in CLCs will be supported by additional/ support staff.

Grades 6 through 8 CLCs will be run as a district-wide program at one or two locations across the district. The location for Gr. 6-8 CLCs is being finalized and we will share more information once planning is finalized.

- Grades 9-12:
 - North Campus will run additional Campus Learning Centers (CLC) as their hybrid model. Currently, a few CLCs are successfully running at both Dean and North Campus. The additional High School CLCs will be housed at North Campus.
 - Dean Campus will continue to run its current schedule of 1 day/week in person by grade level “Vocational Learning Day” as well as continue to run a CLC.

Data Review Process to Confirm Target Entry Dates

Data from all locations serving in-person learning will be reviewed weekly to inform whether the target reentry dates need to be postponed. In the event that target reentry dates are postponed for any grade levels/programs, the

new target entry date will be pushed back two weeks. (For example: grades 1-2 target date is March 8th. If data review indicates a postponement is needed, then grades 1-2 target entry is postponed to March 22. All the subsequent grade level reentry dates will also be pushed back by two weeks.)

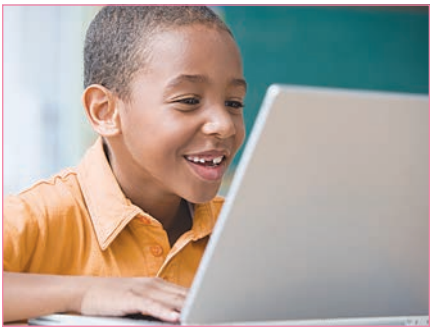
Revised Target Start Dates for Hybrid Learning Model by Grade Level	
Grade Levels/Programs	Target Entry Date*
PK and K	Week of 2/22/2021
Grades 1-2 and Add'l CLCs at North Campus	Week of 3/8/2021
Grades 3-4-5	Week of 3/22/2021
District Wide CLCs for grades 6-7-8	Week of 3/29/2021

VIRTUAL, from page 1

The Best of 7 Virtual Basketball Experience will bring together community partners with young people in Holyoke, with the aim of exposing them to positive role models and speakers who will discuss career advice and its importance in their lives. Registration remains open for the program until Jan. 26, and a few limited spots remain. Holyoke youth can sign up at <https://www.shsni.org/basketball>

The league, which has been serving the youth of Holyoke since 2012, has had more than 4,000 young people participate. The seven-week program is for fifth and sixth grade youth in Holyoke and will consist of the following:

- Week #1: Team Concept, being part of a team and the theme will be Teamwork.
- Week #2: Hall of Fame Night, including an updated Virtual Tour of the newly remodeled BHOE. Theme of the night will be Influence.
- Week #3: Team logo night, with a theme of Creativity.
- Week #4: Speaker series will college coaches and players; theme of the night will be Drive.
- Week #5: Will be a movie night and the theme of the night will be Hardwork.
- Week #6: Game Night with a theme



being the Magic of Learning.

Week #7: Will be our Award Night, with a theme of Achievement.

Each week participants will be able to earn both individual and team points, based on attendance, behavior and participation. Prizes will be awarded from community partners including the United Way of the Pioneer Valley, Six Flags New England, Pizza Hut of West Springfield, and others.

Partnering agencies participating in this year’s virtual basketball league include the Hampden County Sheriff’s Office, Basketball Hall of Fame, Hampden County District Attorney’s Office, Westover Job Corps, US Attorney’s Office, CrossPoint Clinical Services, Springfield College, Greater Holyoke YMCA, United Way of Pioneer Valley, Holyoke Community College, Holyoke Public Schools, Holyoke Police Department and the US Probation Department.

SCHOOLS, from page 1

year, and the funds to purchase these portable units were allocated in the third week of Nov. 2020.

“We were able to connect with the mayor’s office and show that these devices really work,” Anderson said. “We went through the contract process and go the devices in recently, there was a bit of assembly for them and they’ve been sent to the classroom this last week.” He said that each school has a device, meaning 385 classrooms along with gymnasiums and cafeterias have one of the portable air units.

The city used 950,000 dollars in CARES Act funds in order to purchase 449 Carrier OptiClean HEPA air filtration machines. This equipment was installed into schools last week, as this project was a priority for the maintenance team. These devices provide a cleaner environment for the schools, as the HEPA units filter allergens, dust particles, and other thing within the air that can cause infection or flare up’s for asthma.

“It really worked outcry well, it circulates the air in the classroom and filters the air as well,” Anderson said. “It’s a big improvement for the older facilities, and the newer ones as well.”

Anderson said that they will keep using the units even after COVID because it’s important to have clean air and the units have a live of 12-15 years.

“We have taken advantage of a once in a lifetime opportunity to invest in our students and educators,” Mayor Alex Morse said. “This investment through CARES Act funding outfits every classroom in the district with advanced HEPA air filtration units, which supplements a lot of the proactive and preventative modifications that have already been made to improve indoor air quality in our schools.”

Morse said that the city has taken the opportunity to provide the HEPA filtration units to 52 locations throughout the city.

Anderson said that he will be preparing a video on the units, explaining how they work, what they do, that they look like, and all other information needed. That video will be prepared to be on the school website next week, so anyone wondering about the new units can hear all about them. The staff of the Holyoke Public Schools is dedicated to maintaining a safe space for students during this time. These devices have been discussed and decided upon since November of last year, and the school staff is excited to have the units available now.

FOOD, from page 1

“From grab and go, order ahead, curbside or delivery, Holyoke Mall’s eateries are responding to pandemic restraints by offering more ways for customers to enjoy their food,” stated Holyoke Mall’s General Manager, Bill Rogalski. “Restaurants are among the hardest industry hit due to the pandemic, so we encourage guests to support their favorite establishments, wherever they may be, and help keep these businesses and jobs alive.”

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- 110 Grill - Where contemporary dining and innovative cuisine meet. Featuring a separate Gluten Free menu, most of their menu items can be easily modified to fit any allergy needs. Open for limited indoor dining, takeout and curbside pickup.
- Cajun Café – serving up delicious Cajun fusion for takeout.
- Charleys Philly Steaks – Enjoy the flavors of Philadelphia with Charleys signature Philly cheese steaks or other grilled steak, chicken, deli subs and salads. Order online to have it ready upon arrival or have delivered through DoorDash or Uber Eats.
- Cinnabon – Delicious cinnamon rolls and other baked treats are available for takeout or delivery through GrubHub.
- EA Teriyaki – Serving teriyaki dishes prepared using an authentic Japanese cooking method. Everything is freshly prepared without MSG. To have your meal ready when you arrive, order online here.
- The Greek Place - A locally

owned favorite at Holyoke Mall for over 40 years, offering a delicious variety of Greek food including gyros, kabobs, salads and more. Open for takeout.

- Latino’s Cuisine - Serving up hearty portions of authentic Latin favorites for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Open for limited indoor dining, takeout or delivery via GrubHub or DoorDash.
- Max Orient - A variety of delicious Asian food, including their signature Bourbon Chicken. Open for takeout.
- McDonald’s – Serving burgers, fries and more and open for takeout.
- Ninety Nine Restaurant & Pub – A kid-friendly pub offering classic American fare like burgers, wings and salads. Open for limited indoor dining, takeout, curbside pickup and delivery.
- PretzelMaker - Fresh-baked twisted pretzels, pretzel dogs, pretzel bites and more can be ordered here for quick in-store pickup.
- Smoothie Island – Offering delicious treats blended fresh. Open for takeout.
- Sumo Japanese Steakhouse & Sushi Bar – Serving up their famous hibachi dishes. Open for limited indoor dining and takeout.
- Uno Pizzeria & Grill – More than just a pizza shop offering a full menu of Italian cuisine including pizza, pasta, and salads. Open for limited indoor dining, takeout, curbside pickup. Orders can also be delivered through DoorDash and UberEats.
- Wings Express – Order online here to have it ready upon arrival.

All visitors to Holyoke Mall are reminded to wear a mask.



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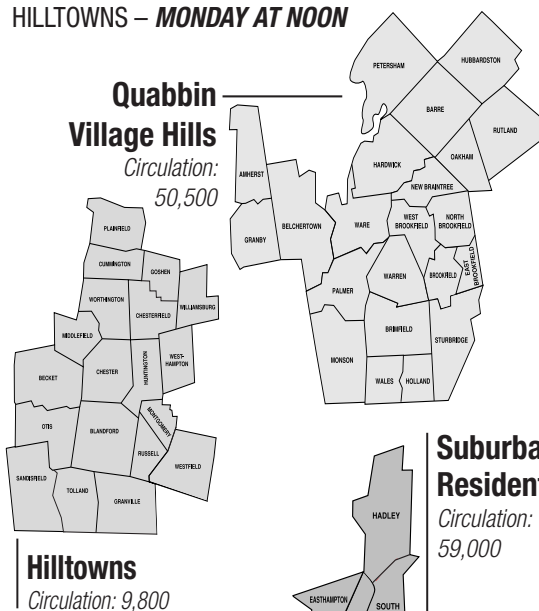
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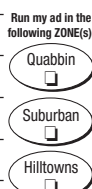
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Public Notices

Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a joint public hearing with the Planning Board on **Tuesday, February 9, at 6:30 pm** to hear a Zone Change application from R1A to BL for Dennis Croteau at 83 Lower Westfield Rd (Map 117 Block 00 Parcel 004) to provide additional parking for commercial property located at 79 Lower Westfield Rd. **Meeting will take place remotely** and can be accessed via www.zoom.us Meeting ID: 835 8041 5733 Meeting Passcode: 113561 or by call in at 1 (929)205-6099 with same Meeting ID and passcode. Written public comment can be submitted to publiccomment@holyoke.org. For information on these applications please contact City Council Admin. Asst. Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at anderson-burgosj@holyoke.org or by phone at (413) 322-5525

Ordinance Chair: Lisi
01/22, 01/29/2021

Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a joint public hearing with the Planning Board on **Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 6:30pm** to hear a Zone Change application from RA to BH for Sergey Troshchiy at 405 Ingleside St (Map 118 Block 00 Parcel 002) to provide affordable pre-owned vehicles. **Meeting will take place remotely** and can be accessed via www.zoom.us Meeting ID: 835 8041 5733 Meeting Passcode: 113561 or by call in at 1 (929)205-6099 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. Written public comment can be submitted to publiccomment@holyoke.org. For information on these applications please contact City Council Admin. Asst. Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at anderson-burgosj@holyoke.org or by phone at (413) 322-5525

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD21P0089EA Estate of: Marian M Leber Also known as: Marian Mattson Leber Date of Death: 12/07/2020 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by **Charles T Leber, III** of Sparks, NV requesting that the Court enter a formal

Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Charles T Leber, III** of Sparks, NV be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in an **unsupervised** administration. **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/24/2021.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of

the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 20, 2021
Rosemary A Saccomani
Register of Probate
01/29/2020

City of Holyoke 536 Dwight Street #15 Holyoke, MA 01040-5078 (413) 322-5650 Invitation to Bid 2021-004 Pina Park Spray Deck Improvements

The City of Holyoke is seeking sealed bids for the construction of the spray deck replacement and improvements to Pina Park.

Bids will be received by the Chief Procurement Officer, Room 15, Holyoke City Hall, Holyoke, MA 01040 until **2:00 PM on 2/18/21** at which time bids will be publicly opened and read.

Documents will be available by email request at: belangerl@holyoke.org and or colond@holyoke.org.

The City of Holyoke reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids.
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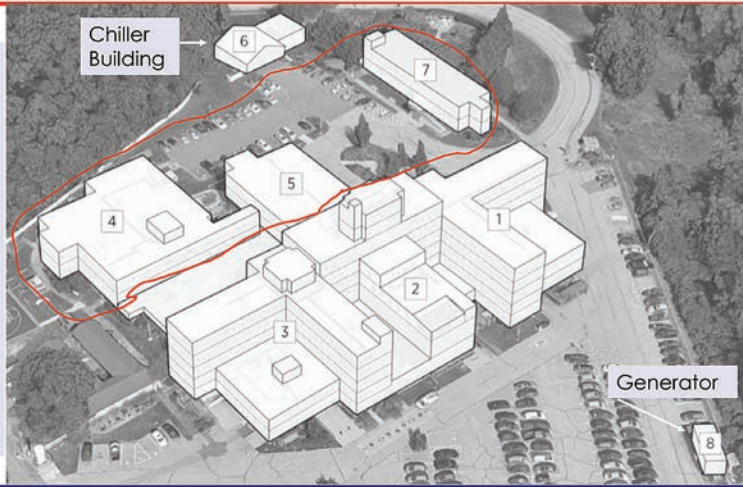
The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$120, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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- Retain Chiller Plant (#6/2006) and Generator Building (#8/1998)



The Holyoke Soldiers Home Coalition seeks more beds than the state has proposed.

Submitted photos



The Coalition's recommendations include a minimum of 280 long term care beds in private rooms.



Nearly 80 residents of the facility have passed away from COVID-19, most of them due to a terrible outbreak early in the pandemic.

SOLDIERS, from page 1

there wasn't space within the room to store them.

In 2013 the plan was to separate people from each other, and if vets had to share a room it would only be with one other person. During this time the Department of Veterans Affairs approved to match funds for the project. The VA agreed to give 65% of the total funds and the state agreed to match the funds by 35%, but the State failed to verify the matching funds by the August first deadline and the project didn't happen.

Because beds weren't added and the project didn't happen there were many family members calling from the waiting list, expressing that it's getting harder to take care of their veteran at home.

"While I was the deputy at the soldiers home we had about 300 veterans on the waiting list for a room, that's why we were looking to expand in 2013," Paradis said. "After that project didn't happen I was always on the phone speaking with family members that are concerned for their veteran's safety and that they need

help. That's when we decided to try to make an adult day health care, so vets would be taken care of here and then go home at the end of the day to make things easier on their family."

However, that project in 2014 did not come to fruition either because the state failed to verify matching funds again.

The Coalition is gathered currently to make sure the needs of the vets and their families are heard during this round of creating more rooms at the Soldiers Home. A study was done by the State to estimate how many beds to put into the new facility, this study was done on the numbers from this past year. During 2020, 40% of vets on the wait list died while waiting, others were taken off the list for different reasons and six asked to be taken off the list because 78 veterans had died in the Soldiers Home already.

These varying numbers from this past year caused the state to offer 150 beds in the new building, estimating a decline of the veteran population by 57 people.

The Coalition feels that not only will the number of veterans on the wait-

list rise, but that the number of active duty servicemen is rising especially with the use of those in the National Guard. Those people will be eligible for Veterans benefits later in life, and this new building will need to last and maintain the health of vets for many years to come. The members of the Coalition feel that 280 beds will be sufficient, as it accounts for a rise in wait listed vets, eligible vets, and those with disabilities.

"I'd rather have us make the room and beds now, to accommodate for future generations," Paradis said. "I'm most likely going to spend my final days with my fellow vets in the Soldiers Home, so I'd like to see it stay kept up."

The Coalition is using their collective voices to speak during board of trustee meetings and to speak to those in legislature to try and the most amount of beds and help for the Soldiers Home. The Coalition doesn't have a say in the building of the new Soldiers Home but they are raising their voices so the community is heard. They want the board of trustees and those in legislature to ask hard questions concerning this project. Questions asking if the waitlist analy-

sis is statistically accurate, if the historic demand at the Soldiers Home was properly considered, if the considered future conflicts, and if National Guard and Reserve members are part of the VA projection.

These are all things that can change the bed count, and the Coalition feels that these aspects weren't considered when the idea of 150 beds was proposed for the new building. The Coalition attends each board of trustee meeting and encourages other residents to attend and speak during public comment, to make sure the needs of veterans in the community is voiced. The Coalition held two other meeting regarding the new building and two members of the board of trustees attended both meetings. Four out of seven trustees have attended the Coalitions meetings and have heard what they have had to say, Paradis is hoping that the board of trustees will push for more beds knowing that veterans are in need of it. While the Coalition is excited that the new building will remain in Holyoke, they are hoping for more accommodation for veterans trying to get into the care facility.

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to order and arrange
pick up time or delivery



Wyckoff Country Club

233 Easthampton Road, Holyoke

Friday & Saturday DINNERS TO GO 4:00pm-6:00pm - Pick Up Times

Go to our Facebook page
for entree choices
and your desired pick up time.
You may also call direct: 536-5364

Stop In and Say Hello
Our Famous Sunday Breakfasts continue
each Sunday in our Dining Room.
8:00am-Noon